

REMARKS

Claims 14-17, 19-22 and 24-25 are pending in this application. For purposes of expedition, claims 18, 23 and 26-27 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 14 and 22 have been amended to incorporate all limitations of respective claims 18 and 23 in order to place all claims in condition for allowance.

Claims 18 and 23 have been conditionally allowed if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their respective base claims 14 and 22. The Examiner's indication of allowability of these claims is noted with appreciation. For purposes of expedition, base claims 14 and 22 have been amended to incorporate all limitations of the allowed claims 18 and 23 in order to place in condition for allowance.

Claims 14-17, 19-22 and 24-27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kouheris, U.S. Patent No. 5,758,085, in view of Ottesen et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,721,815 for reasons stated on pages 2-4 of the Office Action (Paper No. 6). While Applicants disagree with the Examiner's characterization of the cited prior art, claims 26-27 have been canceled without prejudice to render the rejection moot. Base claims 14 and 22 have been amended to incorporate all limitations of the allowed claims 18 and 23 in order to render the rejection moot and to place in condition for allowance.

Lastly, claims 14-27 have also been rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type of double patenting over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,173,328 for reasons stated on page 5 of the Office Action (Paper No. 6). Again, for purposes of expedition, a terminal disclaimer is hereby submitted to overcome the rejection and to place the application in condition for allowance.

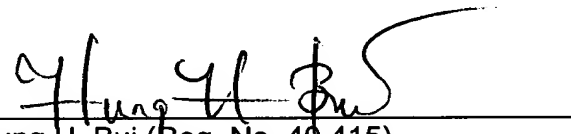
In view of the foregoing amendments, arguments and remarks, all claims are deemed to be allowable and this application is believed to be in condition to be passed to issue. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' attorney at the Washington DC area office at (703) 312-6600.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136. Please charge any shortage of fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, No. 01-2135 (Application No. 500.35453CX1), and please credit any excess fees to said deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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